

Exhibit A

March 20, 2006

The Honorable Michael A. Ponsor

United States District Court  
1550 Main Street  
Springfield MA 01003

Your Honor,

My name is Roman Zhirnov. I'm 35 years old.

In 1997 me, my wife Inna Zhirnova, my son Andrey and my mother-in-law came to the United States as religious refugees. We came to this country dreaming of a much better life as we had in Russia. We imagined it being like in American movies (that was basically the only source what American life looks like). We thought we'll have a good jobs, a big nice house, nice cars etc. But when we came to Chicopee MA the reality was totally different than our dreams. Back in Russia I had my own small business (a restaurant and 2 small food markets), house and car. So after immigrating to the United States we lost everything we had.

In the new country we had to start building our life from the very beginning and it came out that it's not that simple to reach our American dream.

We had to live in one-bedroom apartment: me, my wife, our 4-years old son, mother-in-law and my wife's sister, who just divorced from her husband. That was very stressful, because back in Russia we lived separate from my mother-in-law as a fully independent family.

From the very beginning, since 1992 when me and Inna started our family, my mother-in-law did not accept me as right husband for her daughter. She thought Inna deserved someone better than me, though me and Inna loved each other, had son together in 1993 and I worked hard to provide my family with the decent living.

So in the new country we were hit with a whole bunch of big and small problems: living together in a small apartment, no money, no transportation, hassle finding a job, when you don't know English and don't have any skills, that might be useful in America.

My family was struggling to survive. We never had any financial problems before. My mother-in-law was taking all the money I was making and controlled all the spending of me and my family. We started fighting often.

When I was at work, my mother-in-law and my wife's sister had long conversations with Inna convincing her that I was not right for her and that she needs to divorce me. So Inna was fully under their influence.



Our used to be happy family life was getting worse and worse. I saw that Inna, who never had any secrets from me, started lying to me, that some distance appeared between us, which never existed before. I was trying to convince her to move out from their and start living separate from her mother, but she denied, saying that we don't have enough money to do so. That was a very hard situation, our family was in a big crisis.

One day I came home to find out, that my wife filed for divorce and took a restraining order against me. I was shocked. I was thrown out in the street with no money, no place to live, not allowed to see my son and my wife.

Some people, whom I hardly knew gave me a temporary shelter until I'll find a place to live. I was totally crashed and depressed, I couldn't understand, what has happened to my loving wife, why she did it to me and how to live. I was trying to call Inna, to talk to her, but was not allowed to. One day I heard that her sister is bringing some male friends to their house trying to find a boyfriend for my wife. I couldn't stand it anymore. I've got drunk and went to their apartment to talk with Inna. It seemed to me at that moment to be the only way to save my almost destroyed family, I loved Inna and Andrey and couldn't imagine my life without them. I asked my mother-in-law to leave us alone, that I need to talk with my wife, but she kept speaking for Inna. Your Honor, you know the end of the story.

Now I understand that it was a very bad idea to act like that. But all the pressure and stress that I was under at the moment, extreme emotional disturbance, jealousy forced me to to the limits. My act did not save my family, it destroyed it completely. I regret it so much but, unfortunately, I can't turn the time back.

Me and Inna are divorced since 2000. Time is a healer. After a while we became good friend with my ex-wife. I see my son, who'll be 13 soon, we spend a lot of time together and both enjoy it very much.

As regards to my second criminal conviction in 2000, I met my ex-girlfriend Tatyana Kovalenko in 1999. I just started to get some relief from what happen in 1998. I thought, that I finally found the right person, whom I can start a new family with. Tatyana moved into my apartment, quit her job to stay home as a housewife. We were planning to get married soon. By that time I had a small Russian Video Store (Europa Plus) with my two friends and worked full-time in Taylor Rental as a driver-constructor. I worked hard to provide my future wife with all she wanted. I thought we have good future together... I did my best... Until one day I came home a little earlier than I suppose to and caught my future wife Tatyana drunk, with another male in our apartment, in our bed... I know that I suppose to let her go without any fights and bad acts, just separate from her in a nice peaceful manner, but the way I felt at that moment did not let me to stay cool-minded. My emotions went of the limits. I just started to recover and was betrayed in such a cruel and mean way by the women, whom I trusted as I did myself...

I was released from jail in 2000 with the confidence to stay away from any close relationships. I thought that it's not my luck to find a women, whom I will be able to love again, trust her and make a family. I was so disappointed and frighten with miserable experience, I went thru for the past 2 years.

I started a new business, a Russian Video Store (Books, Music and Videos), but on my own without partners, and put all my little money, time and energy into it.

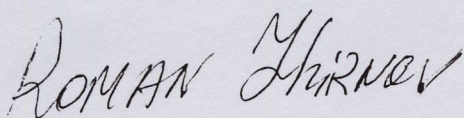


I lived alone without trying to start any new relationship till 2004 when I met Irina Sadovnikova, my present fiancée. I met her in Brooklyn NY, where I went on the business purposes every week, I fell in love with her. After a short time she moved to West Springfield to live with me, as for know we live together for 2.5 years.

She is very kind, intelligent, wise and caring person. She turned me back to life. She stays next to me for the 2 years, that I'm going thru the trial for. And it's not easy time for both of us, it's a lot of pressure. She helped me to recover and gave me back ability to love, trust and believe. Finally, I have a person next to me, whom I would proudly call my wife and whom I'm happy with. We are expecting our first child together by the end of June 2006. And I'm deeply concerned, that I most likely wont be next to her for the last 3 month's of the pregnancy, wont be present at my son's birth, wont see his first smile, his first steps... I wont be there when they need me the most. I'm also concerned that in the present state and after birth Irina wont be able to run the business on her own, it will collapse, what will lead my fiancée and my future son into deep financial problems.

Your Honor, I can only appeal to your objectivity and understanding and kindly ask to consider our situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "ROMAN ZHIRNOV". The letters are fluidly connected, with the first name "ROMAN" in all caps and the last name "ZHIRNOV" in a mix of caps and lowercase letters.

Roman Zhirnov.